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'Bad' Feminism

Kate Bailey writes about the latest surge in woman-on-woman crime…

Feminism underwent mass perception changes in 2014, and we're feeling the effects of that now, in early 2015, with the 'first world' or 'white' feminism criticisms rolling in. Here's the thing: the arguments are being ignited by the idea that a particular 'strand' of feminism is exclusionary. The instant we start detracting from the overall goal of progression by criticising others in what is essentially the same movement, we lose.

Simply: we are all humans and we all want equality, and it's up to us as individuals to fight for it in the context of our lives and as it is relative to us. Do not punish others for having a different upbringing, a reality different to your own. That's ignorant to the universality of our FEELINGS, things we experience as HUMANS - and disregarding a different set of circumstances than your own. That is myopic.

We all know when we're experiencing something, we can't be torn away from that experience until we have resolved it: helping others, being more engaged - sometimes these things are not possible. Theory applicable with the following: women struggling for their 'white' feminism, for the Emma Watson idea of equality are seeking progression in their world. Until we get that, how can we ever begin to think more broadly. Yes, we should endeavour to be aware - but

how can we tell our young girls we need to do more and change the world when ours, and what we are bringing them into, does not have equality itself? If that requires some focus, some tenacity and some attention, don't assume the ignorance of the person who seeks it…

It's misguided and grandiose to see female equality in the global context as a fist raising, singular demonstration and turning point. Revolution looks like individuals changing their behaviour to slowly impact mass change. It begins with one person, their life and how they use feminism as a tool to change it. Then more broadly, as beliefs are solidified and awareness and knowledge is spread - we can focus with unity and purpose to bring the change where it's needed. These causes do not have to suffer in neglect, we still must be aware and do what we can, how / if we can - but everyday, in our lives, that's where we need to see change.

Perpetuating behaviour that diminishes the efforts of people based on their 'whiteness' or exposure to feminists like Emma Watson is diminishing you as an authority, by way of creating a double standard and basically, profiling. It's bad feminism. It's cutting off your nose to spite your face. It's degrading the idea of equality by casting a standard that perpetuates inequality. There's a better way. Share your story in a way that allows people to learn and not feel intimidated that their politics is not informed enough.

People are open to learning more so than they are open to be told they're shit and what they are doing is not good enough. Cultivate compassion through what we experience, not how we experience it. When you open that up, you allow other people to open up to you. If they don't, fuck them. But don't make the assumption they're not just because they don't, yet. We don't need a key tool to bring equality, feminism, to be dismantled from within the framework. Don't play into it. Listen, share, learn and work together - don't be apart of what holds this whole thing back - be what pushes it forward.

For more of Kate's writing, visit littlejoy.de, and don't forget to check out her weekly Trailblazer podcasts at soundcloud.com/tyciblog!

MANIC MUM DAY

A.M.S. writes about the realities of living with a bi-polar parent.

It is a well-known fact that the human brain blocks out periods of intense trauma. Now, it is only through brief late night discussions with my younger sister, that I uncover glimpses of light in an otherwise foggy haze. Snapshots of a time my unconscious mind has decided is best forgotten. It seems illogical that she can remember so much of our mother's mental illness as she was just eight when mum was initially hospitalised, but then she was particularly close to her. I, on the other hand, was a rather independent ten year old, soldiering on regardless and an expert at switching over to autopilot. It is only now, physically removed from family life, that I am able to ponder.

From what I have picked up from the irritatingly polite, 'How IS your mother?' conversations, it is believed that the bi-polar manic depression she suffered from, stemmed from undiagnosed postnatal depression. In her own eyes, mum began spiraling towards a breakdown in the early nineties. A perfectionist in both her work and in motherhood, she asserts it was brought on by the stress of trying to juggle a particularly taxing writing career with her high ideals of family life. She would later tell me that one of the most painful experiences was when my sister, aged six at the time, crept into her room where she was working on her harrowing crime book - a true life murder story about three abused women - and placed a

sad little note in jumbled writing on her lap which read 'Dear Mummy, I am hungry.' Mum had been so preoccupied with her work that she had completely forgotten to make us dinner.

One aspect of mania is the almost physical pain the suffered has to cope with from hyper-acuity, resulting in extreme sensitivity to light, sound, colour and smell. I can remember a shopping trip in preparation for a school trip and mum downright refused to let me buy a certain sunblock. I was furious and simultaneously frightened at the frenzied look in her eyes and the very real emotion she was venting at this product. Now, it seems ridiculously simple - although she thought some colours had almost healing properties, others were deadly. This particular sunblock's packaging had the worst possible colour combination in my mother's deluded eyes, incorporating 'unbearably bright and dangerous' red and 'treacherous, mocking and sinister' orange.

The ordeal of my mother's very public displays of paranoia were in no way as distressing as those as my sister and I viewed in private. Her insomnia led her to wandering the house hallucinating, and the smothering darkness of endless nights made the threats she imagined seem real, and terrifying. Mum wasn't really mum anymore - as she had passed into a bizarre world with a logic of its own and deep down, I was scared I didn't know who she was anymore.

By 1994 the extreme stress and conflict that my mother was dealing with inside her head peaked, triggering her admission into hospital. Although we knew it was 'to make mummy better', having our mother completely removed from us was horrific, and my sister and I were both very ill. I remember going to visit her one day after school: the shadowy ward was eerie, with murky green tiles along the walls and as far as I was concerned, mum was surrounded by common psychopaths. She obviously felt the same, as once the sedation had worn off and she realised she was locked-in; she 'escaped' to come back and see us. She was dragged back instantly.

Years later, following another weekend of teenage frustration I remember sobbing on my bed, desperately wishing for mum to be normal. Chemically, today she is thanks to a concoction of drugs which have enabled her to regain her 'insight' (the ability to differentiate between reality and delusions).

The problem now lies with us. Although mum never lost her articulation or intellect at the height of her mania, she did lose a 'normal' relationship with her daughters and that is what we are trying to rebuild now.

My Bad Eat Diary

January 2015

What a month. January has always been the hardest month for me because it is 'money grabbing industry diet month'. Every year supermarket chains and the like encourage everyone in December to stuff their faces till they are sick and then come January there is some kind of personality disorder and we are then bombarded with fitness gadgets, 2 for 1 on various synthetic weight loss meals and all sorts.

Only advertising can make and break you more than your hormones. This January has been fine. I have not had any guilt and I behaved ridiculously well over Christmas. New Year was slightly questionable as I drank for George Best and Gazza, but my subsequent shame spiral punished me enough. I am now 62lbs down which is 4 stone 6lbs…

Last week I experienced my first online troll. It was a fascinating experience. The man in question got upset when I educated him on the definition of feminism following a 'No More Page 3' tirade. After advising that I was a 'cheaky cow', (please note I also corrected him on his spelling of cheeky thus making future insults better) he then went on to troll me on Twitter for around 7 hours. It did get slightly darker when he found me on Facebook though as you can see in the accompanying image.

So clearly Melvyn doesn't know that I am 'doing something about my weight' and I didn't bother to tell him either. I will just let him read this. Now, I don't think Melvyn is a fully bad person, I just think he needs to realise that he was a bit of a bell end writing this. I also don't understand the

significance of the catalogue model, as pretty as she is I am ok with me so far thanks. It is ultimately an attack and the first one of this kind I have had online. Usually, I am insulted verbally in public with shouts and comments so to read this was at first a bit of a shock and then once it had processed I suppose I was quite amused more than anything. Don't get me wrong, if it has been around 8 months ago I would have completely crumbled, but now I am quite philosophical about it all…

Something I am getting slightly upset about is the whole furore surrounding Tess Holliday being signed as a model. She is a size 22 and I made the mistake of reading comments online. She has been called 'repulsive', 'unhealthy', 'a hog with a nose ring'. At what point did we start looking at people and our knee jerk reactions were disgust, fear, anger or condemnation?

We have been brainwashed into thinking that a symmetrical face and a size 8 figure is perfection. It isn't. It is just what they want you to think. The most beautiful things are those that you question and are not what we unfortunately call the 'norm'. Obesity can be unhealthy, I for one though have never been anywhere near diabetes, my heart is fine, my cholesterol has always been spot on. My blood pressure has been questioned, but the doctor still thinks this could be due to a highly stressful job. Don't get me wrong, I know it can lead to dramatic illness, but how can we know the medical wellbeing of everyone? I am happy for Tess. She has highlighted what an intolerant and disgusting society we live in. She has also more importantly highlighted that she is a beautiful, brave girl.

I do sometimes wish I was as brave as her. Unfortunately, for me I feel that I need to shed my weight so that I can really have my opinions taken seriously. A very sad way to think, I know. It is also why I started blogging because sitting behind a computer means fewer judgments, especially when it comes to the music industry…

Be kind to your fellow man, live your life to the fullest. We were not made to pay bills, bully people for kicks, get stressed about our computers breaking, and queue for hours for the next mobile phone. We were made to experience the world, see beautiful sights, breath in as much oxygen as we can, listen to music, love people and feel our emotions to their fullest. Life is short and you really need to start embracing it - she said to herself.

Halina x.

This is an excerpt. To read the full article and more in the My Rad Fat Diary series, visit tyci.org.uk. For more of Halina's work in music, head to podcart.co.

HOW TO COPE WITH A "FEMINIST FACEBOOK SKIRMISH"

A guide for angry teens by new TYCI contributor Susanna McGuinness.

It's 2am. You just had some totally creepy dream so you're taking a moment to come back to reality by having a quick scroll through your Facebook feed. This is totally what you needed. You like a couple of vaguely political posts about how Nigel Farage looks like an angry raisin, do a quick Buzzfeed quiz to determine your celebrity cat counterpart (Taylor Swift's kitten Olivia, duh), and watch a Vine of a tortoise trying to eat a grape. Much better. You've pretty much forgotten your nightmare about the girl from The Ring and you're about to turn your phone off when suddenly a post catches your eye: "Why Women Should Just Shut Up About the Glass Ceiling."

One of your so-called-friends has shared it from a page called "LOL Feminists Shut Up and Make Me a Sandwich". You feel a rush of pure self-righteous rage as you slam your thumb down on the comment button. You are about to take this guy DOWN. He is SO GOING TO REGRET THIS. He won't know what's coming.

PHDBGIHNTKNLUHSPQMFAKJFVLERI-JRG!!!?@??!??@?
Woah, friend. Slow down.
We've all been there, but you need to take a moment to evaluate the situation. Choose your battles. You don't want to be that girl angry-crying into her keyboard because her extremely articulate and well-researched paragraph of glorious feminist outrage just got shot down with, "LOL butthurt social justice warrior".

In my few years as an teen feminist of the internet generation, I have learned a couple things about the phenomenon I like to call the "Feminist Facebook Skirmish" (or FFS for short). I present these findings to you now in the form of a helpful and instructive flow chart that I made on MS Paint. You are welcome in advance.

Should I comment or nah?

A helpful diagram by Susie

(START HERE)
Some person said some crap thing on Facebook.
Are you fussed?

nah not really tbh → That's fine then go watch some Parks and Rec or something

hella fussed → I know that feel.
Do you like this person usually?

nah they're kind of a dick → Why do you have them on FB? Delete them and go rethink your life choices over a muffin

yuh usually they are a babe and a half → Damn it.
Are you gonna see them this week?

totally → Tell them how you feel about it then and hug it out or whatever u guys do

unlikley → Ah crap
Are you drunk?

what? no?! → Alright then
Do you think this person will be mad at you if you say anything

wHAtt nnO??/! y wud Yuou sY thaTT? → Put the laptop/phone down this is not the time for a FB debate pal

yes → **do u care**

yh a bit → Don't bother then. Go on Youtube and search for "Cat Jump Fails" to cheer yourself up

nah come at me bro → Cool
Do you think they might listen to you?

no chance → Not worth it then. Screenshot it and send it privately with a totally witty caption to someone who can keep a secret.

quite possibly → **proceed with caution**

nah they're cool → Cool
Do you think they might listen to you?

Extra things:

Be polite.
Don't bother with people who aren't polite to you.
Don't waste your time being sad if they aren't seeing your point. Let it go, you had a try.
Look after yourself, if you're getting super uptight about crap online, remove yourself from it and go take a bubble bath/phone a trustworthy pal for a rant/have a T Swizzle jam in your bedroom. GOOD LUCK :)

Tappa Tappa Tappa is a zine project and creative collaboration between artist Jessica Harby and writer Amy Pettifer. Stacey Walton spoke to the pair to find out more about their work.

We LOVE Tappa Tappa Tappa! Can you tell us how you came to come up with the idea?

Amy Pettifer: THANK YOU! That makes us very happy indeed. The zine came about in 2012 when Jessica had a solo exhibition of her artwork titled 'Pretty Girls Doing Horrid Things.' I love her work and had wanted to write something about it, but we agreed that making a zine together would be a more interesting response than a text or a press release.

Jessica Harby: I am almost entirely sure that it was Amy's idea to do a zine. And it was also her idea, from the start, that it wouldn't be a one-off, that it was the start of a project that we could do together for as long as we liked. Looking back, it's a testament to the allure of working with her that my enthusiasm outweighed any concern of adding the production of 100 zines to the tasks of preparing a solo show…

If you were to have a 'mission statement', what would it be?

AP: A while ago I wrote down the phrase 'Strength / Ideas' in my notebook. I think these are my two main aims in life, from every angle, and Tappa embodies these two things for me.

JH: EMOTIONZ + JOKES + BEING UNASHAMED

AP: And communicate in capital letters. Both literally and figuratively.

What's next for Tappa Tappa Tappa?

AP: The hope and intent is

always another issue! But life is life and sometimes that can take time. This latest issue has emerged at a moment when there is both a lot of amazing positivity in the feminist community and the wider spread of a strong message around it, but at the same time the world feels pretty dark, politically, socially, environmentally and I know many people who feel very affected by that; including myself. While we know it's only small fry in the grand scheme of things, our next plan is to collaborate on a limited edition that we'd sell to raise money for a women's charity.
That way we get to make something new together and also, hopefully, give something back.

JH: We usually start pitching ideas for the next issue as we wrap up the current issue, but this time felt a bit different. I'm pleased that this is something that we're doing. Also, we have some plans to partner with cultural institutions to make Tappa Tappa Tappa more widely available in the future, which is very exciting.

Are there any tips you would give aspiring zine makers out there? Any trials and tribulations?

AP: We'll, the best thing about zine-ing is that aspiration doesn't come into it. Anyone can do it, right now! It's brilliantly democratic in that way. Whether you draw/collage it on a sheet of A3 then photocopy it 50 times or you have a fancy camera and make something to a very sexy spec - the rules are yours to make and break. You can play with ideas without holding back or worrying about things being perfect. It should be a way to experiment.

It's definitely good to know your limitations and budget though, and to make good use of the resources around you. Does your work have a wicked printer? Maybe make use of it when no one's looking!

We flit between wanting to be higher spec, and enjoying the classic, black and white photocopies. Jessica is a complete layout whizz and I certainly couldn't do that without her. Her MacBook did eat a 99% finished zine at one point. That was a bad day.

JH: Oh god, I had completely blocked this. I think I dissociated. Frankly, I'm surprised we all survived. Top tip: don't do hours of layout work on a computer that you know is close to having to be replaced. (To be honest, I think if we lived closer there'd be less reliance on computers. Especially after that).

AP: Also 100 hand stitched zines will look amazing but will also give you RSI. But BASICALLY, zines are joy. They are creativity without bounds and a way to share something tangible with people you like and love. I can't recommend it enough.

This an excerpt. To read the full article, visit tyci.org.uk. For more on Tappa Tappa Tappa, check them out at facebook.com/tappatappatappa.

TYCI live MARCH

OUR NEXT LIVE EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE ON **21 MARCH** AND COINCIDES WITH OUR WEBSITE'S MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION OF **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**. THE FULL LINE-UP WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT **TYCI.ORG.UK** VERY SOON.

Subcity Radio

The latest episode of the TYCI podcast is online now and can be found at soundcloud.com/tyciblog. Our next Subcity show will be Thursday 5 March, 5 – 7pm. Tune in at subcity.org/shows/tyci.

TYCI is a collective run by women.

We have a website where we write about things which affect us and put together features on art, theatre, music, film, politics,current affairs and most things in between. We also talk about similar stuff on our monthly podcasts and radio show on Subcity.

This zine is a collection of some of the content from our site and is distributed in conjunction with our monthly live events.

If you would like to get involved, reply to any of our articles or just generally say hi, hit us up on contact.tyci@gmail.com or visit tyci.org.uk.

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